

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE - WINTER 2011

In some moments in time we must simultaneously deal with both happy and sad occasions. This was the situation faced in the district in January.

In Memoriam

January was a particularly sad time period with the deaths of two past District Governors - Dr. Geraldine Purcell and Barbara Geil. While we are saddened by their deaths, we can also celebrate their accomplishments and their service to Zonta. We pay tribute to them in this newsletter in an article authored by past District Governor Sandra Vosper.

New Z Club

I am very pleased to announce that through the efforts of the Zonta Club of Southfield we now have a new Z Club – the Brace-Lederle/MacArthur Southfield Z Club. It is the 6th of the current Z Clubs in District 15. This charter is particularly welcomed because it has been a few years since the last Z Club was chartered in our district. That club was established by the Zonta Club of Charlevoix in 2007. The January charter ceremony for our newest club was certainly memorable. Through their membership these girls have a great opportunity for leadership development and to learn the value of meaningful community service. Southfield School Superintendent Dr. Wanda Cook-Robinson, who is a member of the Zonta Club of Southfield, informed me that there is so much enthusiasm about the Z Club that there is a great likelihood of other Z Clubs being developed in the Southfield school system. I'm certain we can look forward to many of these girls becoming Zontians as adult professionals. Area 4 Director Linda Nabers and Club President Amy Maple, both of the Zonta Club of Southfield, have co-authored an article in this newsletter highlighting the wonderful charter ceremony event. This article is accompanied by photos taken by Meredith Williams who is also a member of that club.

Human Trafficking

District conference attendees were greatly moved by keynote speaker Theresa Flores revelation of the emotional and physical pain she endured as a teenage victim of sex trafficking. Her presentation should serve as a call to action for Zontians to further educate ourselves about this horrible problem and to advocate for preventive measures. In this newsletter critical information about sexploitation and human trafficking are further revealed, and in the Book Corner I have reviewed Ms. Flores book, "The Slave Across the Street". Also, along with Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Committee Chair Glenda Stephens, I will explore the advocacy efforts in which the District can become involved. This effort was already started in January with an invitation from the founder of the Michigan HumanTrafficking Task Force for District 15 to have representation on the Task Force. Additionally, plans are underway for a panel of experts from the federal government, a community service agency and other knowledgeable professionals to address us at the next district conference. Thanks to Area 3 Director Joy Smith who brought to my attention the existence of the Task Force and the activities of her club, the Zonta Club of Lenawee, to create public awareness of human trafficking in their community.

I'm optimistic that our accomplishments in January can be duplicated many times over in upcoming months. With a concerted effort at club and district levels in 2011 we can look forward to increasing our district's profile and accomplishments as we continue our positive and significant impact on the lives of women.